

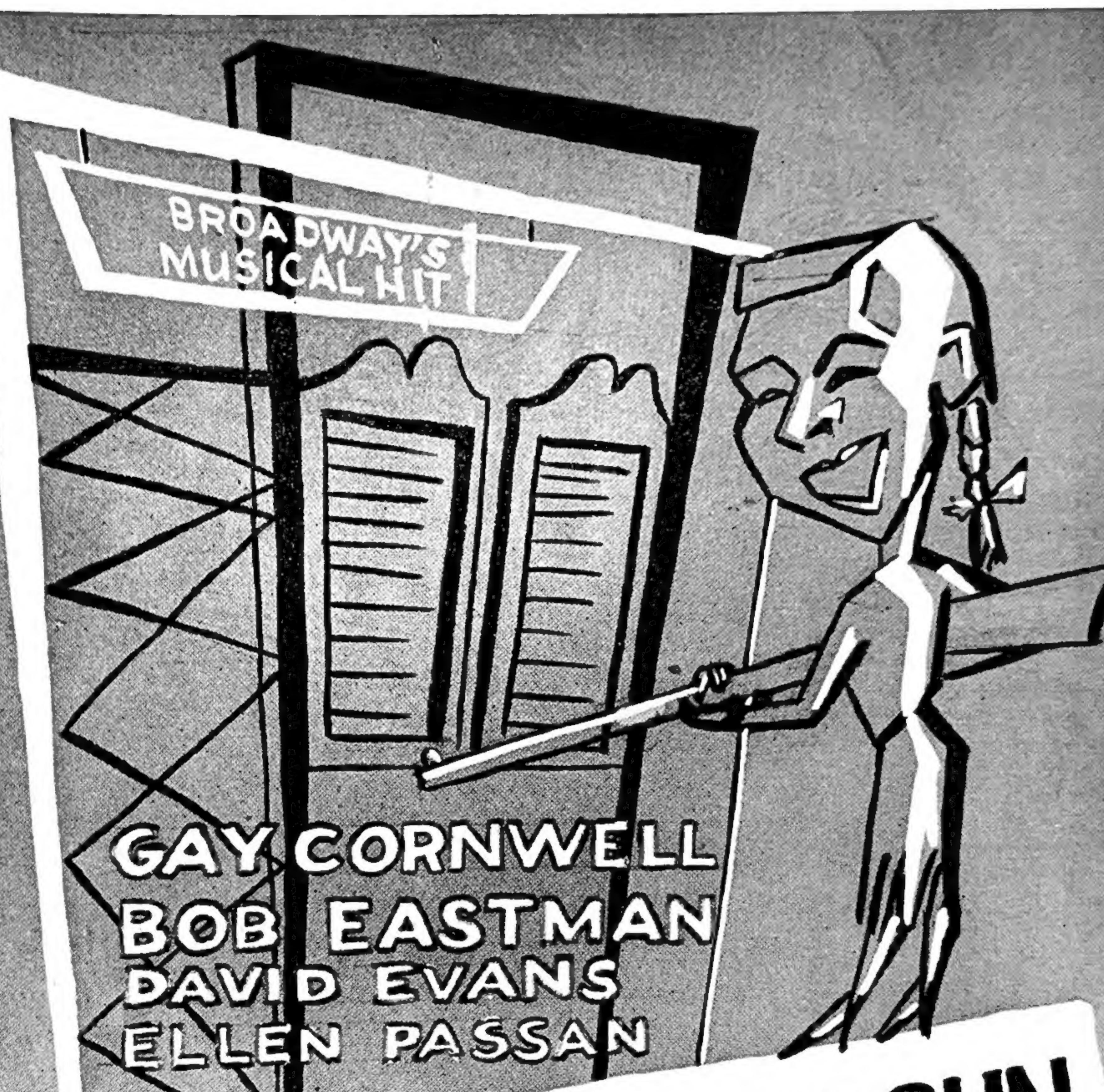
The Shakerite

24th Year, No. 13

Shaker Heights High School, Shaker Heights, Ohio

May 12, 1955

Performances Friday and Saturday at 8:30 P. M. in the Auditorium



BROADWAY'S
MUSICAL HIT

GAY CORNWELL
BOB EASTMAN
DAVID EVANS
ELLEN PASSAN

ANNIE GET YOUR GUN

Book by Herbert and Dorothy Fields Book staged by Margot Klein
Music and Lyrics by Irving Berlin Directed by Reynold Ellis
Technical direction by Ken Caldwell

Who's Who . . .

Cornwell, Eastman Share Lead

What is it like to have the lead in a musical? Gay Cornwell, a junior, is having this experience and she is finding her life as a heretofore unknown actress very exciting.

It all began two years ago when Gay saw Shaker's production of "One Touch of Venus." She thought the show was wonderful and wondered if she would ever be in one like it. This past fall, as a member of Choir, she began to look forward to the big production of the year, the musical. But when plans were announced for "Oklahoma" her hopes fell because the lead was for a soprano. However, fate stepped in and the show was changed to "Annie Get Your Gun." Then, her hopes soared up again because Annie is an alto.

Tryouts were held on a Friday. Each aspirant had to sing some of the songs from the show and read some lines. That afternoon Mr. Ellis and Miss Klein, the directors, announced the semi-finalists and had them do more reading and singing. Then they said, "Don't call us, we'll call you." And they did, the following Wednesday.

Because rehearsals could not start until after the L. E. L. Festival, Gay had to start learning the music and script at home. Although Gay had never done any dramatic work before, she found it easy to memorize the lines. The music was not difficult either. Gay says that Annie is a very natural character and is easy for her to develop.

Then began rehearsals. At first she felt awkward with her hands but now stage movement is no problem to her at all. As the big weekend approached Gay found she had less and less time for anything but rehearsals. These took place every day after school and during her lunch periods. She also rehearsed Saturday mornings. Of course, choir period was spent on "Annie" too.

What does Gay's family think

When Bob Eastman was in tenth grade, he frequently heard Mr. Ellis talk about the Broadway show he intended to do in '55. The more he thought about the show, the more he wanted to be in it; so this spring he tried out for "Annie Get Your Gun". According to Bob, it was a very hectic week until he found out whether he had a part. When he learned that he had the lead role of Frank Butler he was elated.

Bob, like Gay, has never done any acting before and he finds it difficult to develop the character of Frank Butler. The singing is no problem because of the experience he has had in Junior High variety shows. Although Bob enjoys doing the show, he says that show business definitely won't be his career.

Bob feels that the cast and crew are doing a wonderful job and are giving their all to the show. He thinks that the hardest job in the production is the part of understudy; Bob's understudy, Dick Lampert, has to learn two parts: his own and the lead that he is understudying.

Last Sunday Bob, Gay and some of the other members of the cast were on TV. Bob and Gay sang "They Say That Falling in Love Is Wonderful." He had never been on TV before and found it a very thrilling experience.

Bob says that the show has been fun, worthwhile, and a very valuable experience.

about her part in the show? They are excited and very happy for her.

Gay loves doing the show and finds it a lot of fun. Even though she had to lose weight and has to wear an itchy burlap sack, she thinks this is one of the most thrilling experiences she has had in high school.

Needles, Noodles Make Annie Costumes

Those busy girls with the needles in their hands and the rushed looks in their eyes are members of the costume committee for "Annie Get Your Gun." With the exception of the costumes for the leads, all of the clothes for this production are being made by the committee with Barbara Sacks as chairman.

Among their most perplexing problems were the quest for long white gloves to be used in the hotel scene, and the search for Indian blankets to adorn the Choir's big chiefs. It was found that the average Shaker student's wardrobe contains very few of either of these items.

One of the ready-made costumes for which to watch was generously lent for the show by Mary Lou Pratt, and it has quite a history. The costume, which will be worn by one of the townspeople, was originally brought to this country from China in 1890, by Mary Lou's great uncle, a sea captain. It has been packed away for fifty years.

Shaker Musicals Are 'Best of Broadway'

The Choir's production of "Annie Get Your Gun" is not the first time that a Broadway musical has been presented on Shaker's stage.

Two years ago, "One Touch of Venus," one of Mary Martin's hits, was staged with Sally Fullerton, Don Brown, Virginia Webb, Scott Cannell, and Sally Maras in the leading roles. Dave Evans and Vic Samuelson, members of this year's Choir, also took part in the production. The hit song from that musical was "Speak Low."

In 1950, the Choir staged George Gershwin's "Girl Crazy" which had such hits as "I've Got Rhythm" and "Embraceable You." Robert Goldberg, Barbara Van Sittart, and Sam Cheraso were a few of the singing stars.



Several memorable scenes from "Annie", as shown during rehearsals, give an accurate picture of the hustle and bustle of pre-opening activities. Here are highlights from the top musical numbers, featuring Bob Eastman, Gay Cornwell, and Vic Samuelson, in upper left, and Ellen Passan and David Evans, in lower right, along with the Choruses.

Caldwell, Ellis, and Klein Load Annie's Guns for Her

Mr. Ellis, musical director of "Annie Get Your Gun," has had a colorful musical background. In both high school and college he sang tenor leads in musical productions. Many of his college chums at Western Reserve later went into light opera and the theater, and some are directors of Broadway productions today.

An acquaintance of Mr. Ellis' is the professor of Drama at Allegheny College. Mr. Ellis has helped this friend stage musicals on the campus, by directing the musical part of the show. He is now director of both the Tapco choir and his church choir. The Tapco choir is a recreational chorus, and they sing only show tunes and popular music. This shows the variety of music Mr. Ellis has worked with, which adds to his versatility and experience. He has enjoyed working with the choir this year immensely, and states that the co-operation of the Choir is unbelievable and certainly praiseworthy.

Miss Margot Klein, dramatic director of "Annie," had had a broad background in drama experience since toddler days. As a youngster right here in Cleveland, she was a Curtain Puller down at the Cleveland Playhouse, and later studied drama there.

After graduating from Shaker High School she went to Northwestern University where she majored in drama. She graduated in 1953 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Speech. Since then, Miss Klein has done professional radio work in Cleveland and Chicago, and summer stock work at the Chevy Chase, a theater in Illinois. She also directed a TV show here in Cleveland this year.

Mr. Caldwell, the technical director of the show, has designed the sets for all of the Shaker productions since he came to Shaker nine years ago. He had had no previous training in this field and therefore had to start from scratch. He has designed unusual and striking sets

for twenty-seven shows during those nine years—all in addition to a full schedule teaching art.

Props Crew Prizes: Sanded Fingernails, Sea Gull Sandwich

Conducting a large-scale scavenger hunt is the prop committee for "Annie Get Your Gun." Headed by Carol Green and Dave Smukler, this committee has the real job of getting Annie's gun and many other rare items.

Part of the committee, who attacked the making of a bear-tooth necklace with a do-it-yourself attitude, are still trying to make sanded-off fingernails grow back.

Others resorted to stealing feathers from Cleveland Indians and duck-calls from the residents of the Shaker Lakes. Someone even managed to find a whole sea gull for Annies' sandwich.

Among those things which had to be borrowed were several guns from the Shaker Heights Police Department.

'Annie' Proves There's No Biz Like Show Biz

Annie Oakley was a real "rootin' tootin' gun-totin' gal" who was wooed and won at the turn of this century by a real cowboy named Frank Butler. Herbert and Dorothy Fields made the romance of this Midwestern couple live again in their book.

Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein became interested in their story and wanted to weave a musical comedy about this winsome two-some. But there was one hitch in their plans. Since they already had several shows on Broadway, the producers of "Oklahoma" had little time to devote to a new play. They sought the help of Jerome Kern, who promised to write the lyrics and music for them.

Unfortunately, Mr. Kern died before the score was finished, and Rodgers and Hammerstein set out to find another composer. They finally turned over their ideas to Irving Berlin and he created the lilting music that won immediate success for Ethel Merman.

Backstage Manpower Provides Spark

For weeks, many people have been working long hours behind the scenes of *Annie Get Your Gun*. They receive no glory, often little recognition, but they are indispensable to the success of the production.

Mike Smukler, the stage manager, is in complete charge of the backstage running of the show. His assistants are Mary Beth Jamieson and Bill Blanca. Barbara Sacks and her costume committee have made all the Indian and cowgirl costumes. The wigs and many of the fabrics were ordered directly from New York.

The props committee, headed by Dave Smukler and Carol Green, has been busy hunting down stuffed birds, rifles, tomahawks, and peace-pipes, while Richmond Shreve and Ned Gressle have been recording the sound effects. Muriel Moss and Gordon Baldwin are in charge of

publicity, and tickets are the responsibility of Barbara Higgins and choir treasurer Dave Evans. Jack Brokenshire and Carol Goldman head the make-up crew, while Evelyn Ramsdell is chairman of the program committee.

Harvey Mierke, John Frankel, and Paul Dennis of the lighting crew built most of the sets. They were designed by Kenneth Caldwell of the art department and painted by members of Drama Production. Lila Cohen helped with much of the set painting and she also worked on publicity. Carol Finney and Liz Wright are the accompanists, and the assistant directors are Harlan Bigelow and Peggy Beeson.